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SOME NATIVE AUSTRALIAN FODDER PLANTS (Other Than Grasses and Salt-Bushes)

1. Cruciferæ, This family includes such plants as cress, cabbage, etc. There are many Australian representatives, but most of them are very small. After the spring rains they may, however, be so numerous as to form quite a carpet of vegetation.

Lepidium ruderales Linn. Lepidium papillosum F.v.M. - These plants grow abundantly after rains, and are first-class fodder. Horses are able to work hard and keep their condition while subsisting principally on them. The plants constitute also a valuable stimulating diet for poultry, and the seeds are good for food. Both these plants are distributed widely throughout Australia.

2. Capparideæ (Caper Family). **Apophyllum anomalum F.v.M.** - A "Native Currant." Usually known as "Warrior Bush" - a corruption of the aboriginal name "Wareah." A useful fodder plant for stock; usually a bush growing from 6 to 10 feet high. Interior of New South and Queensland.

3. Pittosporeæ (Pittosporum Family). (i.) **Pittosporum phillyrcroedes D.C.**, called variously "Butter Bush," "Willow Tree," and "Native Willow." In times of scarcity this small tree is of great value as it withstands the drought, and sheep and cattle browse upon its foliage. Stock are so partial to it in the interior districts that it is in danger of extermination in some localities, and it should be conserved. The drier districts of all the States, except Tasmania.

(ii.) **Bursaria spinosa Cav.**: "Native Boxthorn." - This plant is greedily eaten by sheep, but its thorny character preserves it from extinction upon sheep runs. It is very variable in bulk. Usually a small shrub, in congenial localities it develops into a small tree. It is also valuable as a shelter for native grasses and other small fodder plants, which might otherwise be eaten out. Throughout Australia.

4. Portulacaceæ (Portulaca Family). - (i.) **Claytonia (Calandrinia) balonnensis, Lindl.** well-known as "Periculia" (sometimes spelt "Parakilya"), the aboriginal name in Central Australia. This and allied plants, such as **Portulaca**, go under the name of "Munyeroo." The occurrence or absence of this plant on the ridges often determines the route of mobs of cattle in the interior. Mr. S. Dixon, states that a large mob of cattle, destined to stock a Northern Territory run, travelled some 200 miles without a drink, which would have been absolutely impossible in the absence of this succulent plant. Interior of South Australia, New South Wales, and Queensland. This may be taken as typical of a number of allied succulent plants, some of which are not without horticultural value.

(ii.) **Portulaca oleracea**, Linn: "Purslane," or "Pigweed"; "Munyeroo" of the aborigines. - This is the plant whose seed forms an article of food for the aborigines. They grind the seed in their stone-mills, and make a coarse kind of damper therefrom. It is a prostrate, succulent plant which stock devour readily; it is also reputed to be nutritious. It is one of those plants which are alike food and drink. Not endemic in Australia. Found in all the States except Tasmania.

5. Malvaceæ (Mallow Family). - (i.) Many plants belonging to this family are readily eaten by stock, and are nutritious, but they have the drawback, particularly when not young, of containing much fibre, and thus of becoming indigestible. None of these contain any acrid or poisonous substance.

(ii.) **Malvastrum spicatum**, A. Gray. - Some squatters have considered this a valuable sheep feed. (Bailey). It has been sent as a fodder plant from the Wilcannia district. It is not endemic in Australia. South Australia, New South Wales, and Queensland.

(iii.) **Sida corrugata**, Lindl. - Sent as a good forage plant from the Parkes district. Other species of **Sida** (and **Abutilon**), other than enumerated, are doubtless of some value as fodder plants. All the States except Tasmania.

(iv.) **Sida rhombifolia**, Linn. (Syn.: **S. retusa**, Linn.) The well-known "Paddy Lucerne," or "Queensland Hemp." A well-known fodder plant in warm regions, including Queensland and northern New South Wales, and having some value in this direction, but a stunted plant in cooler parts, where it becomes a noxious weed. Queensland and New South Wales.

(v.) **Hibiscus heterophyllus**, Vent: "Green Kurrajong." - The leaves, branches, and bark of this tree, and of other species of **Hibiscus**, are greedily eaten by cattle in winter. They are mucilaginous, but especially fibrous. New South Wales and Queensland.

(vi.) **Gossypium Sturtii**, F.v.M.: "Sturt's Desert Rose." - This plant affords stock a good summer feed. (S. Dixon). Interior of South Australia and New South Wales.

6. Sterculiaceæ (Kurrajong Family). - **Sterculia diversifolia**, G. Don. (Syn.: **Brachychiton populneum**, B. Br.) The well-known "Kurrajong." - Cattle and sheep are fond of the leaves and branches, and in some dry seasons have existed for long periods on scarcely anything else. Nor is the attention of stock confined to these trees during droughts; the leaves are always palatable, but it must be borne in mind that no tree is ever preferred by stock to succulent grass. The kurrajong and quandong trees are exempted from the operations of all timber licenses and permits in New South Wales, and cutting them down is prohibited; but, in time of drought, if the leaves of the kurrajong tree are required for feed for stock, the lighter branches may be lopped. Victoria, New South Wales, and Queensland.

7. Geraniaceæ (Geranium Family). - **Geranium dissectum**, Linn: "Crowfoot" and **Erodium cygnorum**, Nees. - Both prostrate plants, often found in grass land and in stony places. They are eaten by stock, and are supposed to be nutritious. In damp land of fair quality they yield an enormous quantity of feed. All States.

8. Rutaceæ - **Geijera parviflora**, Lindl: "Wilga." - This is a small, very umbrageous tree of excellent shape. Sheep are fond of it, and keep it eaten off as high as they can reach.

9. Meliaceæ (Cedar Family). - (i.) **Flindersia maculosa**, F.v.M.: "Spotted Tree," "Leopard Tree." - During periods of drought sheep become exceedingly fond of the leaves of this tree, which they greedily devour, as well as the twigs up to the size of a goose-quill, and hence the tree is in danger of extermination, as it has not the recuperative power of some trees. This tree should only be pollarded. When young it forms a tangled mass, from which a leader emerges in the centre

and forms the stem. This is a wonderful protective arrangement guarding the young tree from destruction by herbivora. Western New South Wales and Queensland.

(ii.) **Owenia acidula, F.v.M.:** The "Colane" or "Native Nectarine." - It has been claimed that this is the handsomest tree in the interior; certainly, it is a very beautiful, small tree, and one of the best of our fodder-trees. Found in the interior of South Australia, New South Wales, and Queensland.

10. Rhamneæ. - (i.) **Ventilago viminalis, Hook.:** "Supple Jack." - The leaves are eaten by stock. South Australia, New South Wales, and Queensland.

(ii.) **Pomaderris racemosa, Hook.:** The leaves of this shrub, when chewed or soaked, are found to be slightly mucilaginous. This explains the fondness that stock have for this plant. It always seems fresh and green, and stands stocking well. (S. Dixon.) It has been reported by other observers in South Australia as a fodder-plant, being much liked by stock of all kinds. The leaves of other shrubs belonging to the same genus have some value for stock feed. All the States, except Western Australia and Queensland.

11. Sapindaceæ. - (i.) **Atalaya hemiglaucæ, F.v. M.:** "Cattle Bush," "Whiterwood." - The leaves of this tree are eaten by stock, the tree being frequently felled for their use during seasons of drought. South Australia, New South Wales, and Queensland.

(ii.) **Dodonæa lobulata, F.v.M. :** "Hop-bush." - One of the best fodder shrubs in the Lachlan district of New South Wales. The seed pods in particular contain a very pleasant bitter. There is no reason, however, to suppose that this particular species is preferred by stock to some others of the genus, which are scattered throughout all the States. Southern and Western Australia, New South Wales, and Victoria.

(iii) **Heterodendron. oleæfolium, Desf.:** "Rosewood" or "Lachlan Emu Bush." Berrigan" is an old aboriginal name. - The seeds, which are covered with a red, fleshy arillus, are eaten by emus. Mr. S. Dixon states that both sheep and cattle feed greedily upon them. It is difficult to kill, springing from the roots when cut down, and it is one of the best for sheep feed. It grows to a girth of fifteen inches and more, and up to a height of twenty feet. All the States, except Tasmania (in the interior).

12. Leguminosæ. - Acacias are Wattles, most of them having special names. Some of these, which include the best fodder species, are given below.

(i.) **Acacia aneura, F.v.M. :** "-Mulga. " - By some called the "King of Fodders." Found in all the drier parts of all the mainland States.

(ii.) **Acacia doratoxylon, A. Cunn.:** "Spearwood," or "Currawang." - The leaves are eaten by stock. All the States except Tasmania and Western Australia.

(iii.) **Acacia implexa, Benth.:** A "Hickory." - In southern New South Wales cattle have been known to eat the leaves of this tree, stripping off all within reach, although grass in the paddock was abundant. The same remarks apply to other species, and it is desirable that further observations be made in regard to the fondness of stock for Acacias. Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland.

(iv.) **Acacia pendula, A. Cunn.:** "Weeping," or "True Myall." Called "Boree" in south-western districts of New South Wales. - With the exception of horses, stock, especially sheep, are very fond of the leaves of this tree, particularly in seasons of drought, and for this reason, and because they eat down the seedlings, it has almost become exterminated in parts of the States. New South Wales and Queensland.

(v.) **Acacia salicina, Lindl.**: "Native Willow," "Cooba," and "Motherumba." - The leaves are eaten by stock. This is another tree which is rapidly becoming scarce, owing to the partiality of stock to it. All the States except Tasmania.

(vi.) **Albizzia basaltica, Benth.**: (Albizzias are closely allied to Wattles.) "Dead Finish." - Cattle like the foliage of this tree. Queensland.

(vii.) **Albizzia lophantha, Benth.** - Cattle browse on the leaves of this tree. It is of rapid growth. Western Australia.

(viii.) **Cassia eremophila, A. Cunn.** - Mr. S. Dixon states that both the pods and the leaves of this plant are eaten by stock. All the States except Tasmania.

(ix.) **Daviesia spp.**: "Hop-bush." - Some of these shrubs are called "Hop-bushes" on account of the pleasant bitter principle which pervades them. Horses and cattle are fond of browsing on them.

Speaking of a dry time in southern New South Wales, Mr. Forester Allan reported that stock ate one species (**D. corymbosa**) ravenously, and it kept them alive. Chiefly in Western Australia, but also in New South Wales and other States.

(x.) **Galactia tenuiflora, Wight et Arn.** - Mr. Nicholas Holtze, of Port Darwin, states that horses are very fond of the foliage.

(xi.) **Glycine tabacina, Benth.** "A very fine fodder," called "Purple Clover," according to a correspondent in the Parkes district.

(xii.) **G. tomentosa, Benth.** - Has been similarly commended. Both species are found in South Australia, New South Wales and Queensland; the former in Victoria and Western Australia in addition.

(xiii.) **Jacksonia scoparia, R. Br; var. macrocarpa**: A "Dogwood." - Cattle and horses relish the foliage of this small tree amazingly. (Mueller.) Western Australia.

(xiv.) **Psoralea tenax, Lindl.** - Considered a good fodder by some. (Bailey.) New South Wales and Queensland.

(xv.) **Swainsona phacoides, Benth.**: "Indigo" or "Liquorice." - Considered a most valuable fodder plant in the Wagga district. The leaves of some species are injurious if eaten in excess; most of them are undoubtedly nutritious if browsed with grasses and other herbage. All the States except Tasmania.

(xvi.) **Templetonia egena, Benth.** - For a note of this species as a fodder-plant, see the *Gazette* for August, 1897. Found in the interior of all the States except Tasmania.

(xvii.) **Trigonella suavissima, Lindl.** - From its abundance in the neighborhood of Menindie it is sometimes called "Menindie Clover." It is the "Australian Shamrock" of Mitchell. This perennial, fragrant, clover-like plant is a good pasture herb. Sir Thomas Mitchell (*Three Expeditions*) speaks of it in the highest manner as a forage plant on several occasions. Interior of Australia, from the Murray River and tributaries to the vicinity of Shark's Bay, Western Australia.

13. Myrtaceæ. - (i.) **Angophora intermedia, D.C.**: "Narrow-leaved Apple-tree." - Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland.

(ii.) **Angophora subvelutina, F.v.M.**: "Broad-leaved Apple-tree." - Are sometimes cut down to

feed cattle in dry seasons, as the leaves are relished by them. They are commonly pollarded for the same purpose. New South Wales and Queensland.

(iii.) **Eucalyptus coriacea, A. Cunn:** "White Gum," "Cabbage Gum." - The leaves of this tree are very thick, and in dry seasons are eaten by cattle. (Woolfs). Opossums have a predilection for the young foliage, so that they often kill trees of this species. Tasmania, Victoria, and New South Wales.

(iv.) **Eucalyptus corynocalyx, F.v.M.:** "Sugar Gum." - The sweetest foliage of p this tree is browsed upon by cattle and sheep. In this respect this eucalypt may be classed with one other, **E. Gunnii.** (J. E. Brown). South Australia.

(v.) **Eucalyptus gunnii, Hook, F.:** "White Swamp Gum," or "Cider Gum." - This tree also bears the name of " Sugar Gum" because of the sweetness of the leaves, which consequently are browsed upon by stock. It is a common tree in Tasmania, where it is called "Cider Gum," as a so-called cider is made from the sap taken from it in the springtime. Tasmania, the extreme south-eastern portion of South Australia, thence to Gippsland, and into New South Wales.

(vi.) **Eucalyptus ochrophloia, F.v.M. :** "Napunya." - This small tree, which grows in the far western portions of New South Wales and Queensland, is a valuable fodder plant, sheep eating it greedily.

14. Ficoideæ. Trianthema crystallina, Vahl. - This is a creeping succulent annual from 1 to 3 feet long. It forms an excellent fodder plant. This family includes " Pig's Faces" (**Mesembryanthemum**), New Zealand "Spinach" (**Tetragonia**), and other useful fodder plants. This plant is not endemic in Australia. In the interior of all the States except Victoria and Tasmania.

15. Umbelliferæ. - Daucus brachiatus, Sieb. : "Native Carrot." - Stock are very found of this plant when it is young, and sheep especially thrive on it when it is abundant. It is a small annual herbaceous plant, growing plentifully on sandhills and rich soil. The seeds, termed "Carrot Burrs," are very injurious to wool, the hooked spines with which the seeds are armed attaching themselves to the fleece, rendering portions of it quite stiff and rigid. The root is astringent, but much relished by sheep. It grows in immense quantities on the rich black flats of flood deposit. To watch a flock of sheep feeding on carrot ground, where there is not a vestige of anything green, would astonish a stranger. A sheep will smell out a root and scrape away with its hoof until it can grasp the top with its teeth, when it draws it out. The common carrot belongs, of course, to this genus, and the fact that it is descended from an apparently worthless, weedy plant, indicates that the present species is capable of much improvement by cultivation. This plant is not endemic in Australia. All the States.

16. Boragineæ. Trichodesma zeylanicum, R. Br. - Baron Mueller recommends this plant as a fodder herb, stating that the dromedaries of Giles's exploring party (1873-4) were found to be particularly partial to it. It is not endemic in Australia. All the states except Victoria and Tasmania.

17. Convolvulaceæ. (i.) Convolvulus erubescens, Sims: "Pink Convolvulus." - Esteemed a good fodder plant in places in western New South Wales. All the States.

(ii.) **Ipomœa Pes-Caprae, Roth.** - Mr. Nicholas Holtze, of the Botanic Gardens, Port Darwin, states that this plant is used as pig-feed by the Chinese of the Northern Territory. Found in Western Australia, New South Wales, and Queensland.

18. Myoporineæ. (i.) Myoporum platycarpum, R. Br.: "Dogwood," "Sandalwood." - The leaves are eaten by stock, but not, so far as can be learnt, with any evil effects. It is often felled for sheep in time of drought. All the States except Victoria and Queensland.

(ii.) **Eremophila longifolia**, F.v.M.: "Emu Bush," "Dogwood"; "Berrigan" of the natives. - The leaves are greedily eaten by cattle and sheep. Observations in regard to the effect on stock on browsing upon plants belonging to the **Myoporineæ** are much needed, as statements hitherto made in respect of them are not always reconcilable. Some of the plants of this family are, in fact, reputed to be poisonous. Allied to this plant is the "Sandalwood" or "Budtha" (**Eremophila Mitchelli**), the bark of which is very appetising to rabbits. Consequently they make for this shrub as soon as grass fails, and hence twigs of the "Budtha" are used (when treated with strychnine) as bait for rabbits. All the States except Tasmania.

(iii.) **Eremophila polyclada**, F.v.M.: "Lignum." - Useful fodder bushes. This and **Muhlenbeckia Cunninghamii** often grow together and go under the same name. All the States except Tasmania and Western Australia.

19. Verbenacæ. Avicennia officinalis, Linn.: A "Mangrove" or "White Mangrove." - The leaves of this tree are eaten by cattle and are considered very nutritious. The mangroves are cut down by the teamsters for their cattle, and in many parts of the coast the cattle have done much harm to oyster beds through trampling them down in their efforts to reach the mangroves. The mangroves protect the banks of tidal rivers, etc., and are, in consequence, exempt from the operation of woodcutters' licenses. Around the greater part of the Australian coast.

20. Polygonacæ. Muehlenbeckia Cunninghamii, F.v.M.: "Lignum." By some considered a useful fodder bush. All the States except Tasmania.

21. Amarantacæ. Ptilotus obovatus, F.v.M.: "Silky Heads." - This plant grows on rough stony country, and is relished by all stock before it gets too dry and woolly. On the barren rocks it is frequently the principal food for stock. The same remark applies more or less to other species of this genus, which is scattered through much of the drier country. Found in the interior of all the States except Tasmania.

22. Nyctagineæ. Boerhaavia diffusa, Linn: Often called "Tar-vine." - This is a useful forage plant, which, having a long tap root, can withstand a considerable amount of drought, whilst it affords a pasture early in the season, ere the grasses are fully developed. Stock are particularly fond of this plant; they seem to prefer it to all other kinds of feed available to them. This plant is not endemic in Australia, and is a troublesome weed in some warm countries. Mr. N. Holtze states that it is used for pig-feed by the Chinese of the Northern Territory. All the States except Tasmania.

23. Proteacæ. Hakea leucoptera, R. Br.: "Pin or Needle Bush." - Eaten by stock. All the States except Tasmania and Western Australia.

24. Euphorbiacæ. (i.) Baloghia lucida, Endl.: "Brush Bloodwood." - At Mount Dromedary this species has the reputation of being greedily eaten by cattle. A farmer cut the limbs of this tree down for his cattle, and they would always eat the leaves of it before anything else that was given to them. Coastal New South Wales and Queensland.

(ii.) **Bertya Cunninghamii**, Planch: The "Gooma" of western New South Wales. - A fodder shrub which has no chance of making headway where sheep feed. In spite of the reputedly poisonous family to which it belongs, there is no record of it having proved deleterious to animals. It has a pleasant bitter flavour. Found in the drier parts of Victoria and New South Wales.

25. Santalacæ. (i.) Choretum Candollei, F.v.M. - Sent as an edible shrub from the Riverina. New South Wales and Queensland.

(ii.) **Fusanus acuminatus**, R. Br.: "Quandong." - A useful fodder-bush, protected from the

operation of timber licenses. See **Sterculia diversifolia** (Kurrajong). Found in the interior of all the States except Tasmania.

26. Urticeæ. Ficus macrophylla, Desf.: "Moreton Bay Fig." - This is an excellent fodder plant, cattle and horses eating the leaves, young twigs, and figs with great zest. The small-leaved fig (**F. rubiginosa, Desf.**), appears to be of equal value as a fodder plant, and doubtless other of our native figs may be put to similar uses. I have known cows fed all the year round on the leaves and figs which dropped from the trees.

27. Casuarineæ. (i.) Casuarina Cunninghamiana, Ait.: "Fresh Water Swamp Oak."

(ii.) **Casuarina glauca, Sieb.:** "Salt Water Swamp Oak." - I have seen cattle leaving fair grass for branches of these trees, and probably they will feed on the leaves of most **Casuarinas**. Found in all the States except Tasmania and Western Australia.

(iii.) **Casuarina stricta, Ait.:** "She-Oak." - This is a useful fodder tree in Victoria and southern New South Wales. Mr. S. Dixon states that in Port Lincoln (S.A.), the fallen catkins (male inflorescence) form the chief sustenance in winter on much of the overstocked country. He adds that this tree is too sour to be very useful to ewes rearing lambs; but if sheep had only enough of it, the "brake" or tenderness of fibre would often be prevented in our fine-wool districts, and much money saved by the increased value a sound staple always commands. The foliage is eagerly browsed upon by stock, and in case of drought these trees are pollarded for the cattle. Old bullock-drivers say that cattle prefer the foliage of the female plant. **Casuarina** foliage has a pleasant, acidulous taste, but it contains a very large portion of ligneous matter. All the States except Queensland and Western Australia.

28. Balanophoreæ. Balanophora fungosa, Forst. - Speaking of Mount Bellenden Ker, Mr. F. M. Bailey records that this root parasite was noticed to be very abundant in all scrubs, producing usually large heads, some noticed being over 3 inches in diameter, and varying from nearly white to dark reddish-brown. Mr. Banning, of Freshwater Creek, says that bullocks are so eager to obtain a bite of it that it is often difficult to drive them through a scrub where it abounds. Queensland.

29. Liliaceæ. Flagellaria indica, Linn.: A "Lawyer Vine." - Leichhardt (**Overland Journey to Port Essington**, p. 424), speaks of his bullocks feeding heartily upon this plant, particularly as the country was most wretched, and the grass scanty and hard. This plant is not endemic in Australia. New South Wales, Queensland, and North Australia.

30. Marsiliaceæ. Marsilea quadrifolia, Linn.: "Nardoo," "Clover Fern." - This plant is much relished by stock. It grows plentifully in swamps and shallow pools of water. It is, however, better known as yielding an unsatisfactory human food in its spore-cases. All the States except Tasmania.

*This article is contributed by J. H. Maiden. Esquire. F.L.S., Director of the Botanic Gardens, Sydney. In the "Forests Flora of New South Wales," by the same author, a number of plants are figured, and particulars given as to their forage value for which there is not space in the present sketch.

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